

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01
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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9317
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E. O. 11652:NA
TAGS: PINT, UR, UK
SUBJECT: BUKOVSKIY IN BRITAIN

SUMMARY: IN THE WEEK SINCE HE ARRIVED IN BRITAIN, SOVIET DISSIDENT VLADIMIR BUKOVSKIY HAS RECEIVED EXTENSIVE AND GENERALLY FAVORABLE MEDIA COVERAGE. IN INTERVIEWS IN THE PRESS AND ON TELEVISION, BUKOVSKIY HAS STUCK TO HIS BASIC THEMES THAT THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF THE USSR SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS POLITICAL PRISONERS AND THAT "DETENTE" HAS BEEN TO THE SOLE ADVANTAGE OF THE SOVIET REGIME. NOW RESTING AT THE COUNTRY HOME OF HIS BRITISH ACTOR FRIEND, DAVID MARKHAM, BUKOVSKIY HAS INDICATED HIS INTENTION TO CONTINUE SPEAKING OUT ON BEHALF OF THOSE INCARCERATED IN THE USSR FOR THEIR POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS BELIEFS. END SUMMARY.

1. SINCE ARRIVING IN BRITAIN FROM SWITZERLAND ON JANUARY 4, VLADIMIR BUKOVSKIY HAS RECEIVED EXTENSIVE DAILY COVERAGE FROM BRITISH PRESS, RADIO, AND TELEVISION. REMARKABLY ELOQUENT IN HIS SELF-TAUGHT ENGLISH, THE HAGGARD-LOOKING BUKOVSKIY HAS RECEIVED ALMOST UNANIMOUS PRAISE FOR HIS COURAGE AND TENACITY. THE ONLY NOTE OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CARPING CAME FROM A "GUARDIAN" CORRESPONDENT WHO CLAIMED THAT BUKOVSKIY WAS SELLING EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS, BUT EVEN THIS WRITER WENT ON TO OBSERVE THAT BUKOVSKIY HAD HIGH ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL PERSONAL EXPENSES AND NO MARKETABLE COMMODITY OTHER THAN HIS EXPERIENCES.

2. WHEN QUERIED AS TO THE NUMBER OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

IN THE USSR, BUKOVSKIY HAS STUCK TO HIS REJOINDER, ORIGINALLY ISSUED IN SIWTZERLAND, THAT THERE ARE 250 MILLION, I.E., THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF THE USSR. IN HIS INTERVIEWS, BUKOVSKIY HAS PROVIDED HARROWING DETAILS OF HIS "TREATMENT" IN SOVIET MENTAL INSTITUTIONS, AS WELL AS THE RIGORS OF PRISON LIFE IN THE USSR.

3. PERHAPS THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE INTERVIEW TO APPEAR IN PRINT HAS BEEN NICHOLAS BETHELL'S "BUKOVSKY'S OWN STORY" IN THE "SUNDAY TIMES" OF JANUARY 9. (STRONGLY ANTI-SOVIET, BETHELL AUTHORED A BOOK IN 1974 ON THE FORCED RETURN TO THE USSR BY HMG OF ANTI-SOVIET COSSACKS AFTER WW II.) AFTER RECOUNTING HIS OWN EXPERIENCES, BUKOVSKIY HAS SOME HARSH WORDS ON THE SUBJECT OF DETENTE: "I HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT THIS AMERICAN POLICY OF DETENTE WAS POSITIVELY MURDEROUS, AS FAR AS THE HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA IS CONCERNED. IT WAS A COMPLETE BETRAYAL. ALL THIS EAST-WEST TRADE IS PAID FOR IN OUR BLOOD . . . I REMEMBER WHEN THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED IN AUGUST 1975. I WAS IN A PUNISHMENT CELL IN VLADIMIR. AS SOON AS IT WAS SIGNED THINGS STARTED GETTING WORSE. . ."

4. BUKOVSKIY ADMITS, "PERSONALLY I AM NOT A SOCIALIST, BUT IT IS NOT FOR ME TO SUGGEST THAT THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE, WHEN IT FINALLY GETS THIS CHANCE, SHOULD CHOOSE THIS PARTY OR THAT PARTY," BUT GOES ON TO SAY THAT HE SEES LITTLE CHANCE FOR THE COMMUNISTS IN A FREE ELECTION IN THE USSR, "NOT AFTER EVERYTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED."

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5. BUKOVSKIY TOLD BETHELL THAT HE PLANS TO WORK ON GETTING "SOME SPECIAL STATUS FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS RECOGNIZED UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW AND INCLUDED IN THE VARIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS CONVENTIONS . . . IF POSSIBLE, I WOULD LIKE THIS IDEA RAISED AT THIS SUMMER'S REVIEW OF THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT IN BELGRADE."

6. BUKOVSKIY, WHO IS PRESENTLY RESTING AT THE COUNTRY HOME OF HIS FRIEND AND LONG-TIME SUPPORTER, BRITISH ACTOR DAVID MARKHAM, HAS INDICATED THAT HE PLANS TO CONTINUE HIS TRAVELS AND ACTIVITIES TO SEEK SUPPORT FOR PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE IN THE USSR. POSSIBLE FUTURE DESTINATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN MENTIONED INCLUDE THE NETHERLANDS, THE FRG, AND THE UNITED STATES.

ARMSTRONG

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL REPRESSION, HUMAN RIGHTS, NEWS MEDIA COMMENTS, DISSIDENT FACTIONS, POLITICAL PRISONERS, PRISONERS RELEASE
Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 10-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
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Subject: BUKOVSKIY IN BRITAIN SUMMARY: IN THE WEEK SINCE HE ARRIVED IN BRITAIN, SOVIET DISSIDENT VLADIMIR BUKOVSKIY HAS RECEIVED
TAGS: PINT, UR, UK, (BUKOVSKIY, VLADIMIR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a7f5b6db-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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